A GUIDE TO NĀLANDĀ

BY

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A GUIDE TO NĀLANDĀ

GENERAL INFORMATION.

The ruins of the ancient Buddhist establishments of Nālandā lie close to the village of Bargaon, about 55 miles south-east of Patna and seven miles north of Rajgir, the ancient Rājagṛiha The ruins are situated at a distance of about two miles from the Nalanda station on the Bukhtiarpur-Bihar Light Railway No conveyance is usually available at the station

The archæological monuments are daily open to visitors from 8 A M to 6-30 P M from April to October, and from 10 A M to 5 P M from November to March The Museum remains open from 10 A M to 5 P.M throughout the year Admission tickets to the monuments and the Museum can be purchased at the site at the rate of two annas per ticket Children under twelve accompanied by their parents or guardians are admitted at half rates *Bona-fide* students accompanied by a responsible teacher of an educational institution are also admitted at half the rate provided that the head of the institution concerned applies for this concession to the Custodian, Nalanda Museum and Monuments (P O Nalanda, District Patna) at least ten days before the date of the proposed visit

Visitors are requested not to smoke or take dogs inside the Museum. Taking photographs of the antiquities in the Museum or of the sites under excavation

is strictly prohibited A very large number of full-size photo negatives are stored in the office of the Superintendent, Archæological Survey, Central Circle, Patna, prints from these negatives can be obtained on application to that officer at the rate of Re 1 per print

No accommodation is generally available at Nālandā Intending visitors will be well-advised to reach the place by the morning train and leave by the evening one

SITE OF EXCAVATIONS[1]

The approach road to the site of excavations leads through an old passage between the side-walls of Monastery Site No 1 on the left and Monastery Sites No 4 and No. 5 on the right On entering through the eastern gate of this passage, the visitor will proceed westward till he finds the open space between the row of temples on the west and that of the monasteries on the east Since the Main Stūpa standing at the southern extremity of the row of temples is at once the largest and most imposing structure, we shall begin our description with this monument

Main Stūpa Site No 3—This *stūpa* is a huge square structure standing in the middle of a court surrounded by a number of small votive *stūpas*, many of which were twice or even three times built one upon the other on the same spot (Plate I) In the course of excavations it was found that the *stūpa* had originally been a very small structure, which was enlarged

[1] In the description of some of the monuments mentioned below, I have received much help from Mr M H Kuraishi's *Guide to the Buddhist Ruins Excavated at Nalandā*, a pamphlet officially published in 1931

by later *stūpas* built upon and around the ruins of the earlier ones, the present mound being the result of seven successive accumulations The first three of these *stūpas* were found buried deep in the interior of the mound They were all under 12 feet square, and owing to the shattered condition of the later remains above them, it was found necessary to cover them up again The four later integuments which can be examined on the spot were much more extensive structures The three different stair-cases that can be seen to the north belong to the fifth, sixth and seven strata respectively, the last two originally covering up the earlier one The fifth of these *stūpas* successively built is the most interesting and the best preserved It had four corner towers, of which three have been exposed and was decorated with rows of niches containing well-modelled stucco figures of Buddha and the Bodhisattvas on these towers as well as on the sides of the stair-case The votive *stūpas* sometimes contain in their core bricks inscribed with sacred Buddhist texts The inscriptions belong to the sixth century A D, so that it is possible to ascribe the fifth *stūpa* to that period The same period is indicated by the stucco figures, which are fine specimens of Gupta art Considering the huge accumulations upon which the fifth *stūpa* was built, it seems that the foundation of the original *stūpa* must have been laid about two centuries earlier

All the later additions followed the square plan of the original *stūpa* and in each case a square framework of encasing walls was built on each side with a view to giving suitable support to the additional masonry to be erected, the casing being filled up with

earth and debris to form a solid core for the enlarged *stūpa*. As the *stūpa* increased in size with each addition, the level of the court gradually rose, and many small votive *stūpas* are found in several places completely or partially buried under the different floors and walls that have been exposed

At the north-east corner of the Main Stūpa is a high platform on which are situated votive *stūpas*, and in one corner there is a square chapel containing a large stone image of Avalokiteśvara facing north, now protected by a wooden shed.

To the south-east of the Main Stūpa is a small shrine containing a stone image facing north, which is believed to be that of Nāgārjuna It is inscribed with the donor's name Bhaṭṭamāṇikya and with the usual pious wish that the merit of erecting this image might accrue to the parents and the teacher of the donor and to all living creatures [1]

Monastery Sites No 1A and 1B—To the east of the Main Stūpa and on a higher level are the remains of two monasteries, having their entrances to the north and facing a brick-paved court, the level of which almost coincides with the concrete pavement seen in front of the stair-case of the fifth level of the Main Stūpa The buildings are provided on all the four sides with small cells each having an entrance facing the concrete-paved verandah, the roof of which was supported by pillars This can be guessed from the stone column bases provided at regular intervals

[1] *De[va]dharmmo 'yaṁ Bhaṭṭamāṇi[kya]sya yad=atra puṇyam tad-bhavatu mat[ā] pitṛi pramukha samasta-ba(ba)ndhu varga pura ssarasya sarvva sat[t*]vānāñ=cha* ॥

on the verandah parapet which encloses the brick-paved court in the middle of the buildings The shrine chamber of both the monasteries is situated in the middle of the south row of cells, facing the entrance gate A flight of concrete-paved steps at the north-east corner of the building suggests the previous existence of an upper storey for each of the monasteries In Monastery Site No 1B there is an octagonal well at the north-west corner of the brick-paved court, while traces of a raised platform or pulpit built against the parapet wall can be seen at the south end of this court

A pit sunk on one side of the court of each of the monasteries revealed the existence of an earlier court a few feet below the upper one, suggesting that these two monasteries were built directly upon the ruins of earlier buildings on the same spot

Monastery Site No. 1.—We now come to Monastery Site No 1, the most important of the monastery group, lying to the north-east of 1A (Plate III) Here there are as many as nine strata, each of which is indicated by concrete pavements and superimposed walls and drains

The main entrance lies in the north wall through a large portico, of which the roof rested on pillars, the stone bases of the latter being still *in situ* At a later period this portico was converted into a porch with an antechamber by the addition of two walls, which narrowed down the entrance to 6 feet Flanking this door there existed stucco figures which, having been badly damaged by fire in ancient days, fell to pieces as soon as they were exposed Effects of this fire are still visible on the western walls Stucco figures also existed in the large niches in the north and

south walls of the portico One of these niches is now filled up, while the other shows the lower part of an image, which, it will be seen, also bears marks of damage by fire

The lower monastery, of which the cells are seen near the entrance on the western and along the southern and eastern sides, is believed to have been constructed in the reign of King Devapāla, the third king of the Pāla dynasty (c 815-854), by a king of Sumatra, as is stated in a copper-plate inscription found in the north-west corner of the entrance The monastery consists, as usual, of a number of monks' cells with wide verandahs in front, originally set round an open quadrangular court, but later on separated from it by a high wall The monastery was originally a building of two storeys, or probably more, as is apparent from the existence of stairs in the south-east corner Many of the cells have been excavated and have revealed the existence of a still earlier monastery underneath, the concrete pavement of its cells being found some five feet below the concrete pavement of the Devapāla level A rough masonry above the fine masonry of the lower cell belongs to the later structures, of which the foundations were built on the remains of the ruined earlier walls below These upper walls, it will be seen, project beyond the lower ones in places, but the projection is not uniform The explanation is that at the time of the construction of the later monastery the whole space forming the earlier verandah was filled with the fallen debris of the upper storeys of the earlier monastery, and therefore it made no difference whether the foundation of the new walls rested on the remains of the old walls or on the hard surface of the fallen

debris. The concrete lintels and beams supporting the projecting portions of the later structure above the lower rows of cells have all been inserted by the Archæological Department in order to preserve and exhibit the remains exactly as they were found

The main shrine of the lower monastery is situated in the middle of the east side and originally contained a colossal figure of seated Buddha, of which indications of the crossed legs and drapery still exist As has been said above, the high wall standing all round on the parapet between the courtyard and the verandah is a later addition, so that the devout worshipper could originally see the image from the courtyard and the entrance of the monastery Several broken figures of stone still exist in the eastern verandah at its northern and southern ends, the one at the southern end showing the legs and pedestal of Trailokyavijaya ('Conqueror of the Three Worlds), wearing a long garland of Buddha figures in various attitudes and trampling Śiva and Pārvatī lying prostrate beneath his feet The pedestal is inscribed with the pious wish that the merit of erecting the image might accrue to the parents and to the teacher of the donor and to all living creatures leading to the attainment of the best knowledge

The platform with a number of stone column bases in front of the shrine on the other side of the later high wall might have been used by the teachers to address students seated in the courtyard The solid rectangular shrine in the middle of the courtyard is a later structure which is now supported for the lower seven feet or so by a modern brickwork The slightly tilted stairs show the height to which the level had

risen when the *chaitya* was constructed The small square chapel to the south-west of the shrine is, on the other hand, an earlier structure and the carving with scroll work and dwarfed flying figures on the stone, originally belonging to some other temple, may be ascribed to the late Gupta period

Between the floors of the lower and upper monastery cells there is a difference of nearly 14 feet The central court was cleared by the later builders to obtain access to the old well in the north-west corner, and a wide staircase was built against the later high wall mentioned above to lead down to the well At the same time two adjacent rooms were constructed against the northern high wall These chambers have corbelled entrances facing south and vaulted roofs, the vaults being among the first examples of the true arch in ancient India The purpose of the rooms is not apparent, as nothing was found inside them The front verandah, however, yielded several sculptured fragments of some interest, which include a remarkable plaque of fine-grained stone representing the eight principal events in the life of Buddha The image may now be seen in the local museum

Later, when the upper monastery also fell into ruins, the level of the courtyard rose to within a couple of feet of the verandah and the cell floors of the latest monastery to be erected on the site, and the whole of the courtyard was concreted over Three successive layers of this concrete have been uncovered and preserved in the south-west corner of the court

The cells of the upper level monastery are built with recesses to contain beds for the monks, a feature which is absent in the earlier monasteries. Indications

of the drains constructed one upon the other in different periods may be seen at the north-east corner of the monastery

At the western corner of the northern verandah of the monastery, on the same level as the Devapāla structure, was found a damaged copper-plate inscription of Dharmapāla (c 770-815), the predecessor of Devapāla, and close to it another one of Samudragupta of the Gupta dynasty (c 335-75) The broad flight of stairs with concrete-paved steps, seen outside the monastery at its western front, led to the highest level of the monastery and therefore belongs to the latest period

Monastery Site No 4.—Monastery Site No 4 lies to the north of Monastery Site No 1, adjacent to it Its northern half was excavated right down to the lowest level of occupation and an earlier monastery was thus brought to light That the upper monastery did not form the first floor of the lower monastery is evident from the existence of the main shrine in the centre of the eastern row of cells, situated exactly upon the earlier shrine, from the existence of a drain in the north-east corner of the upper court, carrying the sewage through the verandah parapet and right through the front and back walls of a cell in the upper monastery, as well as from the well to be seen in the courtyard of the upper level

The platform in front of the shrine in the east (upper monastery) apparently supported a portico The stones placed at regular intervals on the parapets of the verandah served as the bases of pillars supporting the original verandah roof

That the lower monastery too had been double-storeyed is certain from the fact that in the south-west corner we find a staircase on which a flight of stairs of the later period was superimposed An interesting architectural feature here is the remnant of an old sky-light above the lower landing of the earlier stairs

Near the north end of the eastern verandah of the lower monastery, about 3 feet below the floor level of the verandah of the Devapāla period, was found a coin of Kumāragupta (A D 413-55) of the Archer type, which is one of the earliest finds recovered at Nālandā Traces of the destruction of the lower monastery by fire exist in the burnt wooden door-frames and mud mortar of the face masonry of the walls

Monastery Annexe Site No 5—Through a cell in the south-east corner of the upper monastery in Site No 4 we descend by a large staircase built on the south verandah to an earlier monastery (Site No 5), of which a few cells on the northern and southern sides and all the cells on the eastern side have been exposed and conserved A feature of this monastery is that there are two rows of cells, one behind the other the cells in the front row communicating with each other through corbelled doorways The cells of the back row, it will be observed, have no entrance Probably such entrances as had existed at first were blocked up later on, though it must be admitted that no such traces are visible now

From this area a clay mould of Gupta coins was discovered (*infra*, p 38)

Monastery Site No 6—The visitor may now return to the open space in front of the row of monas-

teries and proceed northward till Monastery Site No 6 is reached. This monastery, it will be observed, contains two brick-paved courts, the lower one belonging to the earlier monastery which had existed on the site before the upper one was built on its ruins A feature of interest here is the two sets of double ovens in the upper courtyard which the monks might have used for cooking or for some practical demonstration to students. The ovens had no drains, the two that may now be seen having been provided for for their proper preservation

This monastery, like the ones already seen, contained in the courtyard its own well, belonging to both the periods of its occupation A staircase to be seen in the south-west corner shows that the building was at least double-storeyed There are two shrines in the lower courtyard and one in the upper

Monastery Site No. 7—Separated from Monastery Site No 6 by a passage is Monastery Site No 7 Here three successive monasteries were built on the same site, each upon the ruins of a previous one on a similar plan The site has been so excavated as to indicate very clearly the three periods of occupation, the court, verandah and the cells of the three successive periods being easily distinguishable The parapet round the verandah supported pillars on which rested the roof and of which the square bases are visible in all the three different levels The cells of the first and second periods can be recognized by their doorways blocked up with masonry The upper courts are concrete-paved, while the lower one is brick-paved and contains an oven and a shrine with stairs facing west In the portion that has been fully exposed down

to the depth of the first period, i e, the southern half of the monastery, no well has been found, though it is not unlikely that one might exist in the unexposed northern half

Stone Temple Site No 2—To the north-east of Monastery Site No 7 is a ruined stone temple facing east (Plate II) Specially interesting here is the dado of 211 sculptured panels over the moulded plinth These panels are symmetrically arranged, 20 appearing on each side of the main entrance and 57 in each of the three remaining walls The pilasters intervening between the panels are decorated with pot-and-foliage design and are surmounted by arches, some of them being pointed There is a large variety of scenes depicted on them human figures in various attitudes, household scenes, *kinnaras* playing on musical instruments, Śiva and Pārvatī separately or together, Kārtikeya on his peacock the gods Agni, Kubera, Gajalakshmī, the child Gautama (?) with his writing material, scenes of archery, the *Kachchhapa Jātaka*, a human-headed bird with a foliated tail *makara* designs, a snake charmer, geometrical and scroll patterns, etc The visitor will at once be reminded of the terracotta plaques that are arranged in rows on the different terraces of the huge temple at Paharpur in the Rajshahi district of Bengal A striking similarity is noticeable in both the places not only in the subjects depicted but also in their arrangement and style of execution

It has been suggested that the sculptures belong to the sixth or seventh century A D As the present temple seems to belong to a later date, it is likely that the sculptures originally belonged to an earlier temple

and were utilized to decorate the present temple when it was built

The row of panels is surmounted by two or, at some places, three cornices, which are also decorated at intervals with *chaitya* motif, birds, human heads, etc As one gets up by the staircase facing east, one finds oneself on a *pradakshiṇāpatha* or circumambulation path, upon which rises a shrine showing two different stages of construction

Monastery Site No 8.—We now retrace our steps and come back to the row of monasteries to enter Monastery Site No 8 The arrangements of this monastery with its verandahs, cells, courtyard, shrine, etc , are similar to those that we have already met with Two different levels of occupation may be distinguished by the usual indications The lintel of the door-way of a cell in the south-east corner, which was the only one found in this monastery preserved to its original height, has been repaired , as the original wooden lintels were not found, three concrete lintels were inserted to support the superstructure which is decorated with a pretty dental cornice just a few inches above the cornice This treatment of a door-way is unique at Nālandā The shrine is spacious and imposing with a wide court in front There are two levels visible on it

Monastery Site No. 9—Here the open space at the north end of the western verandah was blocked up subsequently, to form a separate cell, which was provided with a small corbelled door, about 6 feet high The corbelling seems to have replaced a flat rough filling, of which evidences were found during the excavations The earlier drain which was covered up

with small stone slabs, originated from the north-east corner of the court and ran through the whole breadth of the eastern verandah out into the open space to the east of the building The later drain, originating at the north-east corner and having its bed connected with the level of the earlier one, projects diagonally into the court for a length of about 28 feet It appears that this projection was provided at a later date when, due to some cause or other, a portion of the courtyard was blocked up, rendering the original drain useless There are six ovens in the courtyard, and traces of another one near the middle of the northern verandah of this monastery At the south-west corner there is a staircase with a sky-light, similar to that in Monastery Site No 4 Charred layers of wood were found on the steps of the staircase, showing that they had originally been built of wooden sleepers which were subsequently destroyed by fire

Monastery Site No. 10—An interesting feature of Monastery Site No 10 is that the doors had true arches, set entirely with mud-mortar instead of wooden lintels Traces of these arches may still be seen at the south-west and north-east corners of the building Another feature of interest in this building is that the outer façade of its eastern external wall was provided with a door opening at the northern and southern ends for facility of communication from the back of the building These doors were subsequently blocked up There is no well in the courtyard

Monastery Site No 11—Lying as it did near cultivated fields, Monastery Site No 11 was exposed in a very badly damaged condition, the entire northern half of the building having been levelled to the ground

A feature of Monastery Site No 11 is the presence of no less than 25 fragmentary stone pillars, some of which are still standing on their bases on the parapet walls of the verandah at regular intervals of 4 or 5 feet To judge from the nearly complete specimens, their height seems to have been about 7 feet The capitals surmounting the pillars are, however, missing The height of the roofs of the verandah and the cells may be guessed from these pillars as well from the few beam-holes seen at the south-west corner of the building As usual, there is a staircase in the south-west corner with an opening in the wall to admit light The discovery of a few broken jars containing quantities of dried-up mortar and the cistern-like arrangement of one of the cells situated towards the west end of the south row is significant

General Remarks about the Monasteries.—The visitor has now seen all the monasteries excavated so far and will have marked that all of them are very similar in lay-out and general appearance As one goes in by the entrance, one finds on one side a secret chamber, access to which was provided by a very narrow and low opening in the wall of the cell in front of it This inner room was probably used for purposes of storing the valuables of the monastery received as endowments from the public There was a verandah, the roof of which rested on stone pillars, and one side of it was a courtyard open to the blue and on the other a row of cells. The central cell just facing the entrance beyond the courtyard contained a shrine on which was placed an image which, because of its prominent position, was the first thing to catch the eye as one entered the monastery The courtyard too usually

contained a shrine of wide dimensions. The walls were all plastered thickly, traces of the plaster being seen here and there in every building

There are abundant signs left in the ruins of burnt wooden beams, doors, images, grains, etc, to prove that there was a general outbreak of fire at Nālandā at least once, from which all the buildings existing at that time suffered more or less The students and monks must have fled away in panic, leaving all their properties behind The site of the *mahāvihāra*, however, was not abandoned and the people soon after this returned to the old centre of learning

Every monastery was thus deserted and re-occupied, mention having been already made of nine different strata in Monastery Site No 1, which has therefore a very complicated structure In all the other monasteries there are two or three strata, indicating as many periods of occupation The subsequent builders did not generally disturb the old plan they built on the remains of the older structure, using its old walls and hard debris as the foundation for the new walls

Except Monastery Sites No 1A and 1B, which had a different orientation, all the monasteries faced west, had drains discharging the sewage in the east, and staircases in the south-west corner of the building They were separated from each other by a passage running east to west

The row of monasteries faced the row of temples, situated to the west, an open space being left between the two rows The space, however, was not left entirely vacant, as is shown by a few brick structures here and there To this row of temples we turn again

Chaitya Site No. 12.—We have already described Stūpa Site No. 3, the most imposing of the Nālandā monuments, and now proceed to the temple to its north, Chaitya Site No 12 This structure broadly represents two different periods of construction, a later temple having been erected directly upon the ruins of an earlier one The external façade of the earlier structure was decorated throughout with projecting niches and pilasters of various patterns, though few of the niches now contain images, the profuseness of which lends so much attraction to Stūpa Site No 3 The outer plan of this *chaitya* is almost square, the dimensions being 170 feet by 165 feet The later structure built upon the earlier one is also square in plan, but its façades, unlike those of the lower structure are plain The *chaitya* has a rectangular projection at each of the four corners to accommodate four small shrines and shows a broad flight of steps in the middle of the eastern front The outer walls of the main shrine chamber and those of the small shrines situated in the corners are decorated with niches, many of which have stucco images very similar to those seen in the fifth level of the Main Stūpa The main shrine chamber of the upper level faces east The fore-court at the south-east corner of the *chaitya* is studded with votive *stūpas* of different sizes, such as are noticed round the Main Stūpa The *chaitya*, again, seems to have been protected in the southern, western and northern directions by a long continuous compound wall In the seventies of the last century Mr Broadley partially excavated this site

To the north and south of this *chaitya* are two brick shrines, each containing traces of a clossal stucco

statue of Buddha in *bhūmisparśa-mudrā* or earth-touching pose, *i.e.*, the right hand touching the ground, the palm turned inwards.

Chaitya Site No 13.—To the north of Chaitya Site No 12 stands in the same row another structure, Chaitya Site No. 13, now almost in ruins Portions of the external walls of this structure indicate two different periods of construction. The earlier external walls, though much dilapidated, still retain evidences to show that they were provided with beautiful niches, pilasters, etc , similar to those found in Chaitya Site No. 12 The later walls are, however, plain wherever they exist Further clearing of the site is now in progress (1937-38)

To the east of the *chaitya* there is a large fore-court originally concrete-paved, on which a few fragmentary votive *stūpas* are still standing In the middle of the court there is a portico approached by a flight of steps The shrine is still existing above and bears traces of a colossal plaster image of Buddha The walls of the shrine-chamber are built in two sections, the outer one still retaining portions of the original moulding works The concrete floor of the *pradakshiṇāpatha* surrounding the shrine-chamber is now practically ruined

The most interesting feature of this site is a brick-made smelting furnace situated to the north of the main structure The furnace is made of four chambers in one square divided by short walls, each of the chambers being provided with two flues for the fire to burn and air to pass The discovery of burnt metal pieces, slags of metal and other similar objects from the furnace tends to show that it was used for casting metal images

Chaitya Site No. 14.—To the north of Site No 13 is another temple, Chaitya Site No 14, of the same dimensions and presenting almost identical features The outer walls show two periods of construction, plain walls having been erected at many places upon the earlier ones with beautiful mouldings The doorway of the shrine chamber was also narrowed down by the addition of blocks of brick masonry. Inside the chamber is seen the interlocked legs and the head, the latter being 3 feet high, of a colossal stucco image of Buddha

A most interesting feature of the temple is the existence of painting in the niches of the pedestal of the image, which must be hailed as one of the few specimens of mural painting in northern India The specimens are, however, much too fragmentary and what now remains shows the figures of a deer and a lion

THE ENVIRONS OF THE SITE

Images of Buddha—To the east of Chaitya Site No 14 is an inscribed statue of Buddha seated in *bhūmisparśa-mudrā* and attended by the figures of Vasumitra, Maitreyanātha, Śāriputra and Maudgalāyana, specified by inscriptions below each of them The pedestal is inscribed with the Buddhist creed,[1] the name of the donor who was a female lay worshipper

[1] The following verse is referred to as the Buddhist creed *ye dharmā hetu prabhava hetum teshām Tathāgato hyavadat teshām cha yo nirodha evam vādī Mahā sramanah,* 'Buddha has revealed the cause of those phenomena which proceed from a cause as well as (the means of) their prevention So says the Great Monk'

and the wish to transfer the merit of erecting the image to others.

In an enclosure close to this is preserved a colossal image of Buddha (locally known as Kāla Bhairava) seated in *dharmachakra-mudrā*

Image of Mārichi —Another stone image of Mārichī, the Buddhist goddess of dawn, is seen at a distance of about a hundred yards to the east of Chaitya Site No 14 As is usual, one of three faces of the goddess is that of a pig and there are seven pigs represented on the pedestal The villagers worship the image as a Hindu deity

Images at Bargaon.— In the village of Bargaon, to the north of the site of excavations, is a modern temple of Sūrya enshrining a very interesting collection of Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist images A beautiful image of Pārvatī, about 5 feet high, attracts attention by its beautiful features In the rooms are found the images of Sūrya, Vishṇu, Śiva-Pārvatī, Avalokiteśvara, etc Nearby is a big tank, sacred to Sūrya, on the eastern and northern banks of which are again found some Buddhist and Brāhmaṇical gods, including *Mukhaliṅgas*

Mounds at Begampur —Between the villages of Bargaon and Begampur, further to the north, are found extensive mounds representing ancient buildings. They probably mark the northern extremity of the ancient establishments at Nālandā, and give us an idea of how extensive Nālandā was in the days of its glory Surrounding this vast area on all sides there was a row of tanks, some of which still contain water

Image at Jagadishpur.—At Jagadishpur, a village about two miles to the south-west of the excavations, is

a colossal image of Buddha with a high back slab This attractive image shows Buddha seated under the Bodhi tree, the attempts of Māra and his followers, the demons and alluring damsels to distract Buddha from his austerities and their final retreat after defeat and humiliation, and other scenes of Buddha's life, including his *parinirvāna* or death on the top of the back slab

THE MUSEUM

Images.—The Museum houses such portable antiquities as were discovered in the course of the excavation of the sites described above By far the richest collection is that of stone and bronze images of gods and goddesses of the Buddhist and, in a few cases, of the Brāhmaṇical pantheon Very generally speaking, the images are found in abundance in the monasteries where they were worshipped and in all probability manufactured, while in the *stūpa* sites miniature votive *stūpas*, brick-slabs inscribed with sacred texts or tablets containing the Buddhist creed (*ye dharmā* etc) are found The images of Nālandā mostly date from the Pāla period, though there are some notable specimens of the Gupta period (*e g*, the stucco images in the walls of Stūpa Site No 3) As Nālandā was the centre of the Tantra cult, it is natural that side by side with ordinary Buddha and the Bodhisattvas, Tantric gods and goddesses were evolved and worshipped, and this is fully confirmed by the recovered specimens The Pāla school of art is seen at its best at Nālandā, and its influence radiated to the East and the Eastern Archipelago Nepal and Tibet also closely followed the Buddhist pantheon that was sanctioned by the

Nālandā monks, though the northern Buddhists created many more gods or modified the existing ones according to local tradition and fantasy.

The presence of not a negligible number of Brāhmaṇical images in the centre of Buddhist theology and ritual is intriguing Probably their introduction and existence were tolerated, but it must be remembered that this was the age when the Buddhists were conceiving and erecting such deities as Trailokyavijaya trampling on Śiva and Pārvatī, Aparājitā trampling on Gaṇeśa, and Vidyujjvālākarālī whose *vāhana* or vehicle consists of such mighty Brāhmaṇical gods as Indra, Brahmā, Vishṇu and Śiva and who carries the severed head of Brahmā in one of her hands It is no doubt true that there were mutual exchange and borrowing of deities, but it is not possible to think that the Brāhmaṇical deities whose images we find at Nālandā, *viz*, Vishṇu, Balarāma, Śiva-Pārvatī, Gaṇeśa, etc, were ever absorbed in the Buddhist pantheon

Pāla Art at Nālandā—Under the influence of Tantricism the Pāla artist conceived and produced a much greater variety of images than his Gupta predecessor With the extension of the pantheon there was also an increase in the number of poses of the hands (*mudrā*) and posture of the feet (*āsana*) And simultaneously there was also an increased attention paid to the technical details

The specimens of Nālandā were the works of many artists with a varying degree of skill and training Not all of them succeeded in reproducing the calm and contemplative expression that characterizes the Gupta images found at Sārnāth and even the stucco figures of the Bodhisattvas in the niches of the Main Stūpa at

Nālandā. True, the artist tried to reflect the inner meditation on the face of the god by such devices as half-open eyes, to show that the deity was wrapped up in meditation (*dhyāna* or *yoga*), but this sometimes degraded into a matter of formality instead of producing the effect that it was designed to

Considering the vastness of the Nālandā ruins, large stone statues, so common at Sārnāth and elsewhere, are remarkably small in number at Nālandā Nor are there evidences of the gigantic conceptions manifested in the plastic art of southern and western India The Nālandā artist seems to have taken delight in modelling small pieces which afforded ample scope for minute details and careful execution. This may be due to the fact that the major portion of the creative urge of the artist was directed to the production of bronze images, which, of necessity, could not be conceived and executed on a grand scale [1] Metal casting as a science must have been highly developed at Nālandā and it is probable that it even formed part of the curriculum

Some of the Nālandā bronzes are carved in the round, but generally they are placed against a square back-slab rising up to the shoulders of the deity There is often a circular or oval halo which is sometimes detachable In some specimens the halo has completely lost its significance and has been reduced into a decorated piece shaped like an elongated horse-shoe, resting on the pedestal of the image itself and rising an inch or so above the image The pedestal may

[1] There are exceptions, for Hiuen Tsang saw an 80 feet high copper image of standing Buddha at Nālandā

consist of one or two lotuses, which again may rest on a throne. Sometimes the lotus seat rests on two lions, suggesting a *simhāsana* or 'lion throne' Both the male and female deities (with the exception of Buddha) wear elaborate ornaments of the usual type

Buddha.—It is well-known that in early Buddhist art represented at Sānchī, Bharhut and Bodh-Gayā Buddha was never portrayed in human form, his presence being indicated by a symbol or empty throne Images of Buddha began to be erected in the first century A D in north-western India and Mathurā, probably under foreign influence Once the practice was started, it spread all over India in a short time, and in all centres of Buddhist art Buddha formed the most favourite subject of the artist The Nālandā specimens depict the Master in all his characteristic attitudes he may be standing, sitting in meditation under the Bodhi tree or sitting in the European fashion with both legs pendant (*bhadrāsana*) The hands show the favourite poses, the earth-touching meditation, gift, protection, preaching, argumenting He is usually placed on a lotus throne, which may be supported by a lion (No 9-171)[1] Usually the hair is shown in schematic curls with a top-knot (*ushnīsha*), regarded as one of the thirty-two marks of a great man, but in No 1-456 Buddha is wearing a crown on his head In one specimen (No 1-152) Buddha wears matted hair, a characteristic of Śiva, the locks hanging on shoulders He is sometimes accompanied by attendants (*e g*, Nos 1-456, 1-900), but is generally single There are also sculptures depicting the scenes of his

[1] The first figure denotes the site where the image was found, and the second its register number

life Thus, his birth is represented in No 11-110, where Yaśodharā, his mother, is standing under a tree and a male deity to the right is receiving the newly-born baby. No 1A-97 is a delicate carving in stone with the earth-touching Buddha in the centre, the scene of the temptation of Māra on the pedestal and seven other scenes around (Plate IV *b*) The taming of the rogue elephant is the subject-matter of No 1-457, while No 3-272 depicts the death of the Master lying on a couch, two lamenting figures below and a *stūpa* and musical instruments played by unseen hands above

Special mention may be made of No 1-532, Buddha standing on a circular lotus-pedestal, one of the finest of the Nālandā bronzes The smiling but calm expression of the face and the arrangement of the drapery may be marked (Plate IV *a*)

Bodhisattvas—Of the divine Bodhisattvas, Padmapāṇi is represented in many images with or without the Dhyāni-Buddha Amitābha on the crest In No 1-424 he is seated in *lalitāsana* the right hand showing *varada* pose and the left holding a lotus-stalk No 1-631 may be regarded as another variety of the same god, seated in *mahārājalīlāsana* with the right hand in *vitarka-mudrā* and the left holding a lotus There are two fine gilt specimens of Padmapāṇi (Nos 8-6 and 8-7), the former has its right hand raised in *abhaya-mudrā*, while the latter has the Dhyāni-Buddha with *varada* on the crest [1] There are three large stone images (Nos 3-54, 3-63 and 8-15) of the same god with the usual features The first is seated

[1] This is uncanonical, as *varada* is the pose of Ratnasambhava, while Padmapāṇi ought to carry Amitābha (with *dhyāna mudra*) on his crest

in *lalitāsana* with a dwarfish male figure by the side of the god holding a sword in the right hand and a noose in the left No 8-15 may particularly be noted for its fine execution.

A large four-armed Avalokiteśvara in stone is seen in No 12-8, the right hand holding a rosary and *varada-mudrā* and the left ones a lotus-stalk and nectar-pot. There is a *Śakti* (female companion) on each side of the deity representing Bhṛikuṭī and Tārā and a crouching animal praying for mercy (Sūchimukha) on the right half of the pedestal, which also contains a kneeling devotee (Plate VI) In No 1A-83 we find a bronze six-armed Avalokiteśvara, with *varada*, *abhaya*, and a rosary in the right hands and a lotus, pot and book (? staff) in the left and with the Dhyāni-Buddha Amitābha on the crest

No 1A-10 is a stone image of Vajrapāṇi in *pratyālīḍha* posture, holding a combined *ghanṭā* (bell) and *vajra* (thunder-bolt) in the left and *vajra* in the upraised right hands , serpents form the garland, pedestal and head-dress of the deity An important specimen is No 9-46, where the god is seated cross-legged with three heads and six arms, of which two hold the *vajra* against the breast and the others a rosary arrow, bow and an invisible object A female figure, representing the respective *Śakti*, is seated by the side of the god The back is inscribed with the word *Vairochana* No 9-157 will easily attract the attention of the visitor by its perfectly preserved gilt surface It depicts a four-headed god (? Vajrasattva) seated cross-legged on a lion throne, holding the *vajra* against the breast by both the hands The high *stūpa*-shaped crown is noteworthy (Plate V)

Of the many images of Mañjuśrī mention may be made of Nos 9-112 and 1-620 The former represents a particular variety of the god known as Arapachana, seated cross-legged with a book held against the breast in the left hand and a brandishing sword in the right. There is a red stone in each of the four corners of the pedestal In the latter the god is seated in *lalitāsana* with a lotus-stalk in the left hand and a sword in the right In both the images a scarf is wound round the waist and tied on the knee In No 1A-11 we find Mañjuvara, another variant of Mañjuśrī seated cross-legged with the hands placed in *dharmachakra-mudrā*, and a book-on-lotus to the left No 11-45 shows the same god seated on a lion, the left hand holding a lotus-stalk and the right resting on the bent right knee No 4-103 is a very doubtful representation of the god, who is depicted here as a corpulent figure, with a lemon in the right hand and book in the left[1] An inscription on the back shows that the image was erected in the reign of the Pāla emperor Devapāla

Of the uncommon types of the Bodhisattvas, mention may be made of the following No 1-629 shows a deity seated cross-legged holding a chain by the hands A god seated in *lalitāsana*, the right hand in *varada-mudrā* and the left holding a banner, is found in No. 1-973

Jambhala.—Jambhala, the Buddhist god of wealth, is represented in many images No 1-470 shows the god seated in *mahārājalīlāsana*, holding a fruit and purse respectively in the hands An inscription

[1] Kempers identifies this image with Kumāra, *The Bronzes of Nālandā and Hindu-Javanese Art*, p 31

shows that it was the gift of the sage (*yati*) Keka. In No 1-205 we find a four-handed variety of the god seated in *lalitāsana*, the right hands holding a pot and sword and the left ones a flower and mongoose. The right foot rests on overturned vases. The back of the image is inscribed with the letters *ja* and *hum*. No 1-641 represents a scene suggesting a conference[1] of Jambhala seated in the middle of a circular lotus-throne with eight similar figures seated round him

Other Gods.—Of the images of other male gods, mention may be made of No 1-224, a stone image of Trailokyavijaya, a Buddhist god trampling on the Brāhmaṇical gods Śiva and Pārvatī lying prostrate The hands form what is known as *vajrahumkāra-mudrā*, and the face expresses rage An inscription on the back reads

> *ākāśa-lakshanam sarvva ākāsam ch=āpy=alakshanam* [|*] *ākāśa-samatā yogāt=sarvv-āgra-samatā sphu'āh*[2][||*] *Udayabhadrasya*

Another Tantric god Yamāntaka is depicted in No 1A-113 The god is six-headed and six-armed and holds a *vajra*, sword and pestle in the right hands and a noose, human head and cup of blood in the left A garland of human skulls adorns the god and the Dhyāni-Buddha Akshobhya appears on the crest

Tārā.—The most favourite female deity of the Buddhists was Tārā 'the Saviour', the consort of

[1] *Cf* Vajratārā in the Dacca Museum, in which each petal shows a companion goddess, ancillary to the principal deity in the centre of the lotus, N K Bhattasali, *Iconography of Buddhist and Brāhmanical Images in the Dacca Museum*, p 49

[2] The first line of the verse occurs in Kalyāṇagarbha's *sādhana* of Heruka, *Sādhanamāla*, Vol II, p. 470

Avalokiteśvara, and it is in the fitness of things that she is represented by a large number of images, the number being second only to that of Buddha Whether seated or standing, she usually holds a lotus-stalk in her left hand and exhibits *varada-mudrā* in the right In No 1-1051, the goddess is seated on a high lotus throne with the right hand in *vitarka-mudrā* and the left in *varada* The hair is tied with a band and hangs down on the back Another image, No 1A-304, shows the goddess seated on a lion throne in *lalitāsana* The inscription on the back reads *Om Tāre Tuttāre Ture svāhā Om Padmavati Om Kurukulle svāhā Ye dharmā* (incomplete) No 1-743 is a beautiful miniature representation by the goddess, inscribed with the name of the female lay-worshipper Kajjalakā

Prajñāpāramitā —Prajñāpāramitā, the goddess of learning and the deified sacred text of the Buddhists, is represented in No 1A-82A The goddess is seated cross-legged on a lotus throne with her hands forming *dharmachakra-mudrā* and with a book-on-lotus on each side Two other bronzes (Nos 1-370 and 4-115) may be regarded as abnormal varieties of the deity [1] Both of these are seated cross-legged, the two original hands forming *dharmachakra-mudrā* The first image has ten more hands, holding a pot, noose, conch, book-on-lotus, banner, fruit, rosary, sword, *abhaya-mudrā* and an indistinct object The second one has eighteen hands in all and exhibits, besides *dharmachakra-mudrā*, a bell, noose, flag, disc, conch, pot, book-on-lotus, and an indistinct object in the left ones and a fruit, conch, sword, *vajra*, rosary, *varada-mudrā* and

[1] This has been suggested by Kempers, *loc cit*, p 43

two indistinct objects in the right ones The throne on which the goddess is seated rests on two human figures each with a serpent-hood canopy[1] and a decorated pillar The fish, tortoise and *makara*, appearing on the pedestal of the image may suggest the emerging of the deity out of the sea (Plate VII)

Mārīchī—Mārīchī is represented in her common Mārīchīpichuvā form in Nos 1A-65 and 1A-122 As is usual, one of the three faces is that of a boar in both the images The former has eight arms, holding a needle and piece of string in the first pair of her hands, a goad and noose in the second, a bow and arrow in the third and a *vajra* and *asoka* flower in the last The chariot is drawn by pigs The latter one, however, is six-armed and the chariot is drawn by horses

Consort of Jambhala—Hāritī, probably a fertility goddess in her origin, was absorbed in the Buddhist pantheon in the beginning of the Christian era and given to Jambhala as his consort I Tsing, a Chinese traveller of the seventh century, says that 'the image of Hāritī is found either in the porch or in a corner of the dining hall of all Indian monasteries depicting her as holding a babe in her arms and round her knees three or five children Every day an abundant offering of food is made before the image'[2] Of the many images of the deity found at Nālandā mention may be made of the following No 1-372 represents the goddess seated in *lalitāsana* with a child on the left knee and the right hand holding a fruit (a symbol of Jambhala). An inscription on the back of the image says that the

[1] This may have reference to the belief that the *Prajñāpāramitā* text was rescued from the land of the Nāgas by Nāgārjuna

[2] Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion*, p 37

image was erected in the reign of Emperor Devapāla. No 1-459 is also the image of the same deity, with the right hand in *varada-mudrā* and the left holding a stalk supporting a vase with foliage issuing out of it Five overturned vases on the pedestal, a characteristic of Jambhala, leave no doubt about the identity of the image

To the same group may be affiliated the goddess Vasudhārā with four hands (No 1-1052), the left hands holding a lotus-stalk and a pot with ears of corn, while the lower right hand is held in *varada-mudrā* The name of the donor Bodhipālita is inscribed on the back

Sarasvatī —Sarasvatī, who claimed the allegiance of both the Buddhist and Brāhmanical faiths, is beautifully represented in No 1A-95 as seated in *lalitāsana*, the hands holding a lute placed on the right knee, with a seated attendant on each side playing on musical instruments

Aparājitā —Of the other female deities, Aparājitā trampling on Ganeśa and attended by Indra holding parasol (No 1A-64) is an interesting creation of latter-day Buddhism

Other Goddesses —There are some images of female deities which are difficult to identify No 1A-21 is a four-handed goddess, seated cross-legged, the right hands showing a rosary and *varada-mudrā* and the left ones a book-on-lotus and an indistinct object [1] There is a four-armed female figure with a

[1] The identification with Chundā has been suggested by Kempers, *loc cit*, p 43, though the details do not agree On the other hand, the image closely follows the characteristics of Dhanada-Tārā prescribed in the canons.

peacock (?) at the left end of the pedestal (No 1A-305), as the symbols are mutilated, it is difficult to propose any identification [1] Another baffling stone image is No 9-201 which is that of a female deity seated in *lalitāsana* on a lotus throne The right hands hold a sword and fruit and left ones axe and noose A five-hooded serpent canopy protects the head of the deity

Brāhmaṇical Deities.—We now come to the important Brāhmaṇical images No 1-887 is a red-painted bronze Vishnu with the usual four emblems, conch, disc, mace and lotus, and a long garland known as the *vanamālā* a kneeling female devotee sits on the right end of the pedestal In No 1-442 we find Balarāma, with four hands carrying a conch, disc, club and plough, with a *vanamālā* and a seven-hooded serpent canopy over the head An inscription on the back says that the image was erected in the reign of Devapāla

No 4-63 is a stone representation of Śiva-Pārvatī, with their respective *vāhanas* and symbols, seated in the amorous attitude No 1-722 is a four-handed Durgā with a lion vehicle and a *phallus* on the top Mahisha-mardinī or Durgā killing the demon is rather poorly represented in No 1-594 An interesting variety of Gaurī or Durgā is found in No 1A-100, which depicts the goddess as holding a rosary in the upper right hand, a bough of a tree ending in a disc in the upper left and a vase in the lower left, the lower right being broken.

[1] The peacock *vahana* may suggest Kaumārī, the consort of the Brāhmaṇical god Kārtikeya, but the Buddhist creed on the back of the image precludes that possibility

An alligator appears on the pedestal, which is supported by a lion and a buffalo [1]

Of the other Brāhmanical deities mention may be made of Sūrya (No 1-336), Revanta (No 1A-123) and Ganeśa (No 3-125) A small bronze (No 1A-158) represents either Gaṅgā on *makara* or Indrāṇī on elephant

Copper-plates —Monastery Site No 1 yielded three copper-plate inscriptions belonging to Samudragupta (c 335-375), Dharmapāla (c 770-815) and Devapāla (c 815-854) respectively The first of these was issued from Ānandapura on the second day of Māgha in the 5th regnal year At the end Prince Chandragupta is mentioned The genuineness of the record is, according to some scholars, not above suspicion [2] The copper-plate of Dharmapāla records the grant of a village in the district (*vishaya*) of Gayā in the Nagara (Patna) division (*bhukti*) [3] The copper-plate of Devapāla is much more important and is summarized in the Appendix The original copper-plates are now in the Indian Museum

Stone Inscriptions —The following two stone inscriptions, both of which are very important, are now in the Nālandā Museum

[1] The image has been plausibly regarded as representing Gauri or Durgā See J N Banerji, *Journal of the Greater India Society* Vol IV, pp 137 *ff* Other images of this type have been found at Nālandā One of these (No 11 70) is a miniature bronze in which the goddess holds a *phallus* in the upper right hand, *varada* in the lower right, a staff in the upper left and a fruit in the lower left The animals are identical

[2] *Annual Report, Archæological Survey of India*, 1927-28, p. 138

[3] *Ibid*, pp 138 9

(1) Inscription of the time of Yaśovarmadeva,[1] recording various gifts, including a permanent grant to the temple erected at Nālandā by King Bālāditya, by Mālāda the son of a minister of King Yaśovarmadeva, evidently the renowned king of Kanauj of the first quarter of the eighth century The inscription gives a glorious description of Nālandā extracts of which may be quoted here

> 'Nālandā, with her learned men, famous on account of their (knowledge of) good scriptures and arts, mocks, as it were, at all the cities of great emperors
>
> 'The row of whose monasteries with their pinnacles kissing the clouds is, as it were, designed by the Creator to be a beautiful garland of the earth shining high (in the space), and being the delightful home of the community (of monks) who are the abode of good learning, with the palaces and temples brilliant with the net-work of rays (issuing out) of various jewels, assumes the splendour of Sumeru, the beautiful home of hordes of noble *Vidyādharas*
>
> 'Here, King Bālāditya erected this spacious, unique and white palace of the Lord (Buddha) the son of Śuddhodana, as if out of a desire to insult Mount Kailāsa
>
> 'The palace, it seems, went round the whole earth, disgracing the splendour of the moon, putting a stop to the beauty of the chain of peaks of

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol XX, pp 37 *ff*, with corrections in *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol VII, p 669 and Vol. VIII, p 37; *Modern Review*, September 1931.

Himâlaya, then defiling the white river of the sky and silencing the sea of critics, having realized that it was futile to wander about in a world where there was nothing to vanquish, it (now) stands aloft, as if as a pillar of the great fame it has won '

(2) Inscription of Vipulaśrīmitra [1] This neat inscription records the activities of the ascetic Vipulaśrīmitra, who, among other things, built a temple of Tārā, adorned with a court and tank, at Somapura where he resided for a long time and renovated a local monastery[2] At Nālandā he erected a monastery, 'an ornament of the world, surpassing in a wonderful manner the palace of Indra,' and made it over to the line of ascetics to which he belonged The inscription was recovered from the uppermost stratum of Monastery Site No 7 which, as we have already seen shows three periods of occupation On the basis of this inscription we may ascribe the construction of the uppermost monastery to the first half of the twelfth century, to which the inscription may be referred on palæographical considerations

Besides these, inscriptions giving the Buddhist creed or names of donors often occur on the stone and bronze images The more important of them have been mentioned along with the images bearing them Inscriptions found by previous explorers are not preserved

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol XXI, pp 97 *ff*

[2] Somapura has been identified with Paharpur in the Rajshahi district of Bengal, where a huge temple with a monastery and a temple of Tārā have been unearthed It appears that the last was built by Vipulaśrīmitra, who might have also been responsible for some subsequent additions to the monastery attached to the temple

in the Nālandā Museum and are mentioned in the Appendix

Brick Inscriptions.—Many brick inscriptions, mostly fragmentary, have been discovered from the core of the small votive *stūpas* attached to the Main Stūpa. The inscriptions give either the Buddhist creed, *ye dharmā* etc., or the more elaborate *Nidāna-sūtra* or *Pratītyasamutpāda-sūtra*, with or without the *nirodha* portion.[1] This *sūtra* is found in many Buddhist texts, both Sanskrit and Pāli. It details Buddha's theory of the Chain of Causation, *viz.*, ignorance produces constituents, constituents produce consciousness, consciousness produces individuality, individuality produces the six organs of sense, the organs produce contact, contact produces sensation, sensation produces thirst, thirst produces attachment, attachment produces existence, existence produces birth, birth produces old age, death, sorrow, etc. With the suppression of ignorance, all the following causes are suppressed, and there is thus no old age, death, sorrow, etc.

No. 3-278A is dated in the Gupta year 197, *i.e.*, A.D. 516-7.[2] As we have seen above, this helps us to ascribe the fifth stratum of the Main Stūpa to *c.* A.D. 500. Another brick gives the above *sūtra* with its

[1] The object of depositing these texts inside *stūpas* was no doubt to acquire merit. I Tsing records the practice of depositing relics of Buddha and the *gāthā* on the Chain of Causation, *i.e.*, *ye dharmā* etc., inside *chaityas* (Takakusu, *loc. cit.*, p. 150). It is interesting to recall the tradition that Kanishka engraved some Buddhist scriptures composed by the Fourth Buddhist Council on some sheets of copper, deposited them in a stone receptacle and built a *stūpa* over it. Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Vol. I, p. 156.

[2] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol. XXIV, p. 20.

vibhanga or division, the latter portion having been so long known to us only in its Chinese translation [1]

Sealings and Plaques.—The vast number of sealings discovered at Nālandā fall under two categories (1) ecclesiastical and (2) civil Under the former head come those seals which bear the Buddhistic creed, sometimes with the figure of Buddha, some again bear only the image of Buddha without any inscription Many specimens of the 'Official' seal of the Nālandā Monastery exist, with the inscription, *Śrī-Nālandā-mahāvihārīy-ārya-bhikshu-sanghasya*, 'Of the Community of Venerable Monks of the Great Monastery at Nālandā' (Plate X) Above the inscription occurs the *dharmachakra* with a deer on each side, suggesting the scene of the Deer-Forest of Sārnāth where Buddha first preached the Law, the motif that was also adopted by the Pāla emperors Sealings of the individual establishments of Nālandā are also found Mention must also be made of the discovery in one of the votive *stūpas* near Chaitya Site No 12 of no less than 1000 unburnt clay caskets, each encasing two small plaques with their inscribed faces together [2] It is difficult to suggest to what use these lumps of clay were put They might have been deposited there for earning religious merit or distributed to the pilgrims as a memento of their visit to the sacred place

Of the secular sealings, historically the most important are those which belong to royalties, such as Narasimhagupta and Kumāragupta (II) of the Gupta dynasty, Śarvavarman and Avantivarman of the

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol XXI, pp 194 *ff*

[2] *Cf* the discovery of Tārā plaques at Paharpur

Maukhari dynasty, Supratishṭhitavarman and Bhāskaravarman of Assam (Plate IX), Harshavardhana of Kanauj, and Paśupatisimha, Devasimha and Īśānasimha of unknown lineage

The personal sealings give a vast number of names. There are also seals of particular offices, such as the office of the Kumārāmatya in the Magadha Division (*bhukti*), Office of the Gayā District (*vishaya*), Office of the Rājagṛiha District, Office of the Kumārāmatya of the Nagara (Patna) Division, etc

Coins—The coins found at Nālandā include those of Kumāragupta I and Narasimhagupta of the Gupta lineage, Śaśāṅka of Bengal (*c* 600-620), Ādivarāha or Bhoja I of the Pratīhāra dynasty (*c* 835-85), and of Govindachandra of the Gāhadavāla dynasty (*c* 1114-55) All of these are now deposited in the Indian Museum A clay mould of a Gupta coin inscribed with *jaya* is a very interesting antiquity and may be seen in the Nālandā Museum

Carved bricks—The carved bricks were no doubt used for decorating buildings and portray human and animal figures, faces of demons (*kīrtimukha*), circular discs with floral designs, etc

Pottery—The collection of pottery includes earthen jars with mica dust adhering to their surface, decorated with animal and floral designs and furnished with short spouts A large broken jar, over six feet in height, may be seen in the open to the north of the Museum

A small heap of burnt rice is reminiscent of the fire from which Nālandā suffered probably more than once

APPENDIX.

A Short History of Nālandā.

Early References.—Nālandā[1] has a very ancient history going back to the days of Mahāvīra and Buddha According to Jaina texts it was a suburb (*bāhiriyā*), situated to the north west of the famous city of Rājagṛiha Indeed so important was the place that Mahāvīra spent as many as fourteen rainy seasons here The Pāli Buddhist literature contains many more references to Nālandā In the course of his sojourns Buddha often visited the place, which is mentioned as prosperous, swelling, teeming with population, and containing a mango grove called Pāvārika The distance from Rājagṛiha to Nālandā is given as one *yojana*[2]

Another place near Rājagṛiha was Nāla which is mentioned in the *Mahāsudassana Jātaka* as the birthplace of the Elder Śāriputra, an important disciple of Buddha In other texts the same place, under the name of Nālaka or Nālakagrāma, appears as a centre of Śāriputra s activities[3] But the *Mahāvastu*, a Sanskrit Buddhist text, gives Nālandagrāmaka, half a *yojana* distant from Rājagṛiha, as the place of birth of Śāriputra, and finds support in some Tibetan texts, including Tāranātha's History of Buddhism, a seventeenth century work[4] It is therefore reasonable to hold that Nāla, Nālaka, Nālakagrāma and Nālandā are all the variants of the same place name

Origin of Name.—Hiuen Tsang says that according to tradition the place owed its name to a Nāga of the same name who resided in a local tank But he thinks it more probable that Buddha in one of his previous births as Bodhisattva became a king with his

[1] In ancient literature both the forms Nālanda and Nālandā occur indiscriminately

[2] For references see Hirananda Sastri's article on Nālandā in *Proceedings of the Fifth Oriental Conference*, Vol I

[3] See Law, *Geography of Early Buddhism*, p 31

[4] Schiefner, *Tāranātha s Geschichte des Buddhismus in Indien*, p 65 See also Dey, *Geographical Dictionary of Ancient and Mediaeval India*, s v Nālandā

capital at this place, and that his liberality won for him and his capital the name Nālanda or 'charity without intermission'[1]

Early History by Tāranātha.—According to Tāranātha Aśoka gave offerings to the *chaitya* of Śāriputra that existed at Nālandā, and erected a temple here he must therefore be regarded as the founder of the Nālandā *vihāra*[2] The same authority adds that Nāgārjuna, the famous Mahāyāna philosopher and alchemist of about the second century A D, began his studies at Nālandā and later on became the high priest here It is also added that Suvishṇu, a Brāhmaṇa contemporary of Nāgārjuna, built 108 temples at Nālandā to prevent the decline of both the Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna schools of Buddhism[3] Tāranātha also connects Āryadeva, a philosopher of the Mādhyamika school of Buddhism of the early fourth century, with Nālandā[4] Further, Asanga, a Buddhist philosopher of the Yogāchāra school, belonging to the fifth century,[5] is said to have spent here twelve years of his later life, and to have been succeeded by his still more famous brother, Vasubandhu, as the high priest of Nālandā[6]

Under the Guptas.—These statements of Tāranātha would lead one to believe that Nālandā was a famous centre of Buddhism already at the time of Nāgārjuna and continued to be so in the following centuries But it may be emphasized that excavations have not revealed anything which suggests the occupation of the site before the Guptas, the earliest datable finds being the copper-plate of Samudragupta and the coin of Kumāragupta This is fully confirmed by the statement of Hiuen Tsang that 'a former king of the country named Śakrāditya selected by augury a lucky spot' and built here a monastery His successors, Buddhagupta Tathāgatagupta, Bālāditya and Vajra built some monasteries

[1] Beal, *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, Vol II, p 167 The derivation *na alam da* has been proposed but it does not satisfactorily convey the sense that it is intended to

[2] Schiefner, *loc cit*, pp 65 6

[3] *Ibid*, pp 69 *ff*

[4] *Ibid*, p. 83

[5] Some scholars are in favour of a date earlier by a century.

[6] Schiefner, *loc cit.*, p 122

nearby[1] As some of the names here were borne by the Gupta emperors, it has been held that all of them refer to the Imperial Guptas. Śakrāditya has been plausibly identified with Mahendrāditya, i e, Kumāragupta I (c 413 455) Buddhagupta seems to be identical with Budhagupta (c 476 96) and Bālāditya with the king who had to encounter the Hūṇa chief Mihirakula early in the sixth century[2]

The assumption that the monasteries of Nālandā were the creation of the Gupta emperors beginning with Kumāragupta I receives confirmation from the fact that Fa Hien, the Chinese pilgrim of the early fifth century, does not mention the monastic establishments of Nālandā He speaks of the village of Nālo, the place of birth and death of Śāriputra, and of a *stūpa* existing here[3] As has been suggested above, this place may be identical with Nālandā, but the absence of any other monument except a *stūpa* at the time of Fa Hien is remarkable

Under Harsha.—Hiuen Tsang saw here an eighty feet high copper image of Buddha raised by Pūrnavarman, 'the last of the race of Aśoka rāja'[4] belonging to the early sixth century And the illustrious Harshavardhana of Kanauj (606 647) no doubt greatly helped the institution by his munificence He built a monastery of brass which was under construction when Hiuen Tsang visited the place The biographer of Hiuen Tsang says that Harsha remitted 'the revenues of about a hundred villages as an endowment of the convent and two hundred householders in these villages contributed the required amount of rice, butter and milk 'Hence', he adds, 'the students here, being so abundantly supplied, do not require to ask for the four requisites This is the source of the perfection of their studies, to which they have arrived This statement makes it clear that the students had not to beg for their daily food

[1] For Hiuen Tsang s description of Nālandā, see Beal, *loc cit*, pp 167 *ff* His biographer Hwui Li adds some interesting details . Beal, *Life of Hiuen Tsiang*, pp 109 *ff*

[2] These identifications have been proposed by H C Raychaudhuri, *Political History of Northern India*, 3rd ed, p 401

[3] Legge, *Travels of Fa Hien*, p 81

[4] Beal, *Records*, Vol II, p 118

Harsha highly revered the Nālandā monks and called himself their servant [1] About a thousand monks of Nālandā were present at the royal congregation at Kanauj [2] Royal patronage was, therefore, the keynote of the prosperity and efficiency of Nālandā. As Hiuen Tsang says, 'A long succession of kings continued the work of building, using all the skill of the sculptor, till the whole is truly marvellous to behold' [3]

Hiuen Tsang.—Hiuen Tsang also recounts a few of the monasteries and temples that he saw here, giving the direction in most cases Thus, the monastery built by Buddhagupta was to the south of the one built by his father Śakrāditva, to the east of Buddhagupta's monastery was the one of Tathāgatagupta, the one built by Bālāditya was to the north-east of the last, while Vajra's monastery was to the west After this an unnamed king of Central India is said to have built a great monastery to the north and erected a high wall with one gate round these edifices Hiuen Tsang also gives a long list of the other monasteries and *stūpas* that he found Modern attempts to identify them with the existing ruins have met with scanty success, as the six centuries that separated Hiuen Tsang and the final desertion of the site must have produced many new buildings and modified the existing ones

Hiuen Tsang was very warmly received at Nālandā and resided here for a long time The courses of study included the scriptures of the Mahāyāna and Hīnayāna schools, *Hetuvidya* (logic), *Śabda vidyā* (grammar), *Chikitsāvidyā* (medicine), as well as such purely Brāhmaṇical texts as the Vedas including the *Atharvaveda* From the accounts of the pilgrim it is clear that Nālandā was bustling with literary activities

> 'The priests to the number of several thousands are men of the highest ability and talent Their distinction is very great at the present time, and there are many hundreds whose fame has rapidly spread through distant regions Their conduct is pure and unblamable They follow in sincerity the precepts of the moral law The rules of the convent are severe, and all the priests are bound to observe them The countries of India respect them and follow them The day

[1] Beal, *Life*, p 160
[2] *Ibid*, p 177

is not sufficient for asking and answering profound questions From morning till night they engage in discussion, the old and the young mutually help one another Those who cannot discuss questions out of the *Tripiṭaka* are little esteemed and are obliged to hide themselves for shame Learned men from different cities, on this account, who desire to acquire quickly a renown in discussion, come here in multitudes to settle their doubts, and then the streams (of their wisdom) spread far and wide For this reason some persons usurp the name (of Nālandā students), and in going to and fro receive honour in consequence If men of other quarters desire to enter and take part in the discussions, the keeper of the gate proposes some hard questions many are unable to answer, and retire One must have studied deeply both old and new (books) before getting admission Those students, therefore, who come here as strangers, have to show their ability by hard discussion, those who fail compared with those who succeed are seven or eight to ten'

Hiuen Tsang received here the Indian name Mokshadeva and was remembered by the inmates of the Nālandā monastery long after he had left the place Several years after his return to China, Prajñadeva, a monk of Nālandā, sent him a pair of clothes, saying that the worshippers every day went on offering to Hiuen Tsang their bows and salutations

Nalandā had by now acquired a celebrity spread all over the East as a centre of Buddhist theorogy and educational activities. This is evident from the fact that within a short period of thirty years following Hiuen Tsang's departure, no less than eleven Chinese and Korean travellers are known to have visited Nālandā [1]

I Tsing —Next in importance to Hiuen Tsang stands I Tsing, who reached India in 673 and studied at Nālandā for a considerable time His work records very minute details about the life led by the Nālandā monks, which he regarded as the ideal to be followed by the Buddhists all over the world He says that the number of monks of the Nālandā monastery exceeded three thou sand in number, maintained by more than two hundred villages bestowed by previous kings [2] He also gives details of the

[1] For a list, see Beal, *Life*, pp xxviii *ff*

[2] Takakusu, *A Record of the Buddhist Religion*, pp 65 and 154

curriculum, which, besides the Buddhist scriptures, included logic, metaphysics and a very extensive study of Sanskrit grammar [1] He also testifies to the strict rules of discipline that the monks observed, their daily life being regulated by a water clock [2]

Under the Pālas.—The Pāla emperors held East India from the eighth to the twelfth century A D and were noted for their patronage of Mahāyāna Buddhism At the same time they established other monasteries at Vikramaśīlā, Somapura, Odantapurī and Jāgaddala,[3] which might have created a division in the activities of Buddhist scholars It is even stated by Tāranātha that the head of the Vikramaśīlā monastery had control over Nālandā [4] Still there are ample epigraphic and literary evidences to show that the Pālas continued to be liberal in their munificence to Nālandā

Some Scholars.—Mention may here be made of some famous scholars who by their deep learning and excellence in conduct created and maintained the dignity which Nālandā enjoyed It has been already stated above that the early Mahāyāna philosophers, Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, Asaṅga and Vasubandhu, were all, according to Tāranātha, the high priests (*paṇḍita*) of Nālandā Next in point of chronology comes Diṅnāga, the founder of the mediaeval

[1] *Ibid*, pp 167 *ff* It appears from his account that all the existing grammatical texts of the Pāṇinian school, including the *Ashṭādhyāyī* itself, were taught to the students It is strange that in spite of this the Buddhist texts in Sanskrit should have been written in incorrect language

[2] *Ibid*, p 145

[3] Vikramaśīlā was founded by Dharmapāla (Schiefner, *loc cit*, p 217) and is generally identified with Patharghata in the Bhagalpur district The Somapura Monastery was, according to Tāranātha (p 209), founded by Dharmapāla's successor Devapāla and has been identified with Paharpur in the Rajshahi district in Bengal According to inscriptions found there the monastery was named after Dharmapāla. Odantapurī or Uḍḍandapura was erected near Nālandā by either Gopāla or Devapāla (*ibid*, pp. 204 and 206) and may be identified with modern Bihar in the Patna district Jāgaddala was founded by Rāmapāla, one of the last kings of the dynasty, somewhere in North Bengal

[4] Schiefner, *loc cit*, p 218

school of logic, he was a southerner who was invited to Nālandā to defeat in disputation a Brāhmaṇist scholar and received the title *Tarka puṅgava*[1] The next famous *Paṇḍita* was Dharmapāla, who had retired just before Hiuen Tsang arrived. At the time of the pilgrim the head of the monastery was Śīlabhadra, under whom the pilgrim studied and whose scholarship and personal qualities he describes eloquently Śīlabhadra was probably succeeded by Dharmakīrti, who is credited by Tāranātha to have defeated a Brāhmaṇical philosopher, Kumāralīla[2]

The next important figure was Śāntarakshita who was invited by King Khri sroṅ deu-tsan to Tibet, where he lived for many years till his death in 762 About the same time Tibet was also visited by Padmasambhava, who acquired great fame as the founder of the institution of Lamaism in Tibet It was no mean honour for Nālandā that one of its scholars gave to Tibetan religion a form that is continuing to the present day

Thus Nālandā succeeded in attracting the best Buddhist scholars whose fame spread to distant countries and persisted through ages. Rightly has it been said that 'a detailed history of Nālandā would be a history of Mahāyānist Buddhism'[3]

Epigraphic and Literary References.—The following epigraphic and literary evidences help in the reconstruction of the history of Nālandā —

(1) Inscription on an image found at Shahpur (near Bihar) of the Harsha year 66 (A D 672 3), belonging to the reign of Ādityasena and recording the erection of the image at Nālandā-*mahāgrahāra*[4]

(2) Copper-plate of Devapāla (c 815 854) issued from Mudgagiri (Monghyr) It records that being requested by the Mahārāja Bālaputradeva of Suvarnadvīpa (Sumatra) through a messenger, Devapāla granted five villages in the district of Rājagriha in the Śrīnagara (Patna) division for the upkeep

[1] Schiefner, *loc cit.*, pp 131 *ff*

[2] The identification with the famous Brāhmaṇa *Mīmāmsaka* Kumārila is at once suggested, but does not seem to be very likely, as Kumārila probably lived somewhat later

[3] *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol IX, *s v* Nālandā

[4] Fleet, *Gupta Inscriptions*, p 208 The image is now lost It is probable that the word was *mahāvihāra*

and maintenance of monks and copying of manuscripts in the monastery built by the Sumatran king, on the 21st day of Kārtika in the 39th regnal year It was found in Monastery Site No 1 and is now in the Indian Museum [1]

(3) Inscription on a Tārā image found at Hilsa (Patna district) of the 35th year of Devapāla It mentions Mañjuśrīdeva, a monk of Nālandā [2]

(4) Inscription found at Ghosrawan (Patna district) belonging to the reign of Devapāla and recording the activities of a monk named Vīradeva, who was appointed by Devapāla to look after Nālandā [3]

(5) Pillar inscription in a Jaina temple in the Bargaon village (Nālandā) of the 24th year of Rājyapāla (c 911 35) [4]

(6) Vāgīśvarī image inscription found at Nālandā by Cunningham in 1862 It records the erection of the image in the first year of King Gopāla II (c 935 992) [5]

(7) A Nepal manuscript of the *Ashtasahasrika prajñāparamitā* copied at Nālandā in the sixth year of Mahīpāla I (c 992 1040) [6]

(8) Nālandā stone inscription, found in 1863, of the eleventh year of Mahīpāla I It refers to the destruction of Nālandā by fire and its subsequent restoration [7]

(9) Bodleian Library manuscript of the *Ashtasahasrikā prajñāparamitā* copied at Nālandā in the reign of Rāmapāla (c 1084 1126) [8]

(10) The Royal Asiatic Society manuscript of the same text copied in the reign of Govindapāla in the latter half of the twelfth century [9]

[1] *Epigraphia Indica*, Vol XVII pp 310 *ff*

[2] *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, Vol X, pp 31 *ff*

[3] Maitra, *Gaudalekhamalā*, pp 45 *ff*

[4] *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. XLVII, pp 110 *ff*

[5] Maitra, *loc cit*, pp 86 *ff*

[6] *Proceedings of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1899, pp 69 *ff*

[7] Maitra, *loc cit*, pp 101 *ff*

[8] *Catalogue of Sanskrit MSS in the Bodleian Library*, Vol II, p 250

[9] *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, N S, 1876, p 3

End of Nālandā.—It is impossible to give a separate account of the end of Nālandā it forms only a chapter of the history of the disappearance of Buddhism from India

It is evident from the account of Hiuen Tsang that Buddhism was slowly decaying when he visited India Important centres of early Buddhism were deserted and some new centres, such as Nālandā in the east, Valabhī in the west and Kāñchī in the south, had sprung up After some time Buddhism lost its hold in other provinces and flourished only in Bihar and Bengal, where royal patronage succeeded in keeping alive a dying cause But it is clear that Buddhism was no longer popular and centred round a few monasteries The Buddhism that was practised in these places was no longer of the simple Hīnayāna type, nor even had much in common with the Mahāyāna of the earlier days, but was strongly imbued with ideas of Tantricism, inculcating belief in the efficacy of charms and spells and involving secret practices and rituals, many of which are revolting to the modern sense of morality

The crusade of the Brāhmaṇical philosophers and preachers such as Kumārila and Śankarāchārya in the eighth century must have been another potent factor in rendering Buddhism unpopular. They are reported to have travelled all over India, defeating the Buddhists in arguments and compelling them to submission The final blow was delivered by the Muḥammadan invaders, who, according to their own accounts, drove away the monks and destroyed their cloisters Cut off and divorced from the support of a laity which had been its greatest strength in early days, Buddhism disappeared from India with this onslaught

The Muslim historian Minhāj describes how Muḥammad Bakhtiyār Khiljī fell upon and destroyed a city in western Bihar, which they called Bihār (Sanskrit *vihara*) and which was found to be a place of study [1] It is not unlikely that Nālandā is being referred to here Tāranātha says that 'the Turks conquered the whole of Magadha and destroyed many monasteries, at Nālandā they did much damage and the monks fled abroad' [2]

Another Tibetan authority, the *Pag sam jon zang*, however, adds that after the raid of the Turks the temples and *chaityas* were

[1] *Tabaqāt-i Nāṣirī*, tr Raverty, p 552.

[2] Schiefner, *loc cit*, p 94.

repaired by a sage, Muditabhadra 'Soon after this, Kukuṭa-siddha, minister of the king of Magadha, erected a temple at Nālandā, and while a religious sermon was being delivered there, two very indignant Tīrthika (Brāhmaṇical) mendicants appeared. Some naughty young novice monks in disdain threw washing water on them This made them very angry After propitiating the sun for twelve years, they performed a *yajña*, fire sacrifice, and threw living embers and ashes from the sacrificial pit into the Buddhist temples, etc This produced a great conflagration which consumed Ratnodadhi '[1], one of the libraries of Nālandā

The first European account of the village Bargaon containing the ruins of Nālandā was given by Buchanon Hamilton, who visited the place in the first quarter of the nineteenth century and found here some Brāhmaṇical and Buddhist images [2] But it was only in the sixties of that century that Cunningham identified the place with the ancient Nālandā on the basis of the distances and directions given by the Chinese pilgrims and of some image inscriptions that he found here In his Report he gives a thorough description of the ruins as he found them and of the antiquities that he collected He also tried to identify the temples and monasteries mentioned by Hiuen Tsang with the existing ruins In fact, it was he who drew the attention of the scholastic world to the importance of this site [3] After a few years, Broadley carried out some unsystematic excavations in Chaitya Site No 12 and published a monograph on the place [4]

From 1915 16 the Archæological Survey of India has been regularly excavating the site, at first with a grant from the Royal Asiatic Society of London, and later on out of its own resources. The activities of the Department in the direction of excavation, protection of the monuments from further ruin and collection of antiquities have resulted in making Nālandā a place which no archæological pilgrim should leave unseen

[1] Vidyabhusana, *History of Indian Logic*, p 516
[2] Martin, *Eastern India*, Vol I, pp 94 *ff*
[3] *Archæological Survey of India*, Vol I, pp 28 *ff*
[4] *Ruins of the Nālandā Monasteries at Burgaon*, 1872

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INDEX TO MUSEUM ANTIQUITIES DESCRIBED IN THE TEXT.

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PLATE I

General View of Stupa Site No 3

PLATE II

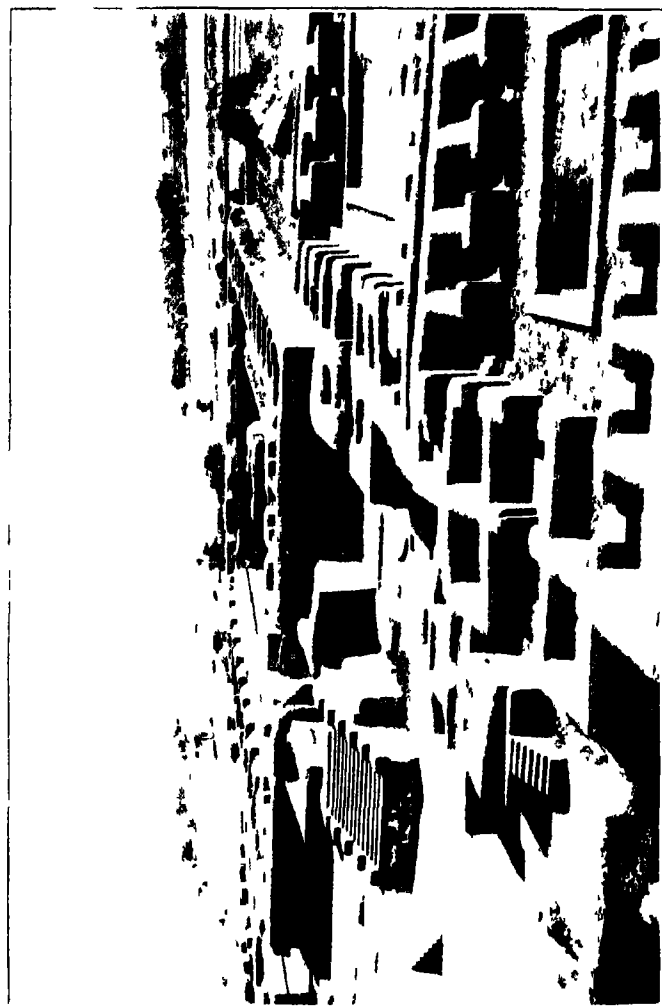
GENERAL VIEW OF TEMPLE SITE No. 2

GENERAL VIEW OF MONASTERY NO. I AND PORTIONS OF SITES NO. IA AND II

PLATE IV

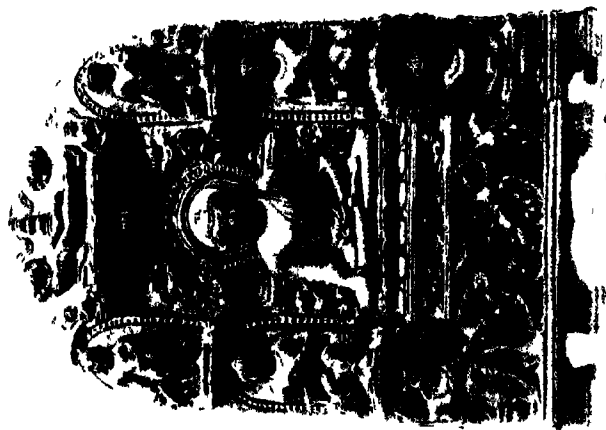
(a) BUDDHA OFFERING PROTECTION

(b) BUDDHA TOUCHING EARTH SCENES OF LIFE AROUND

PLATE V.

FOUR HEADED GOD HOLDING THUNDERBOLT

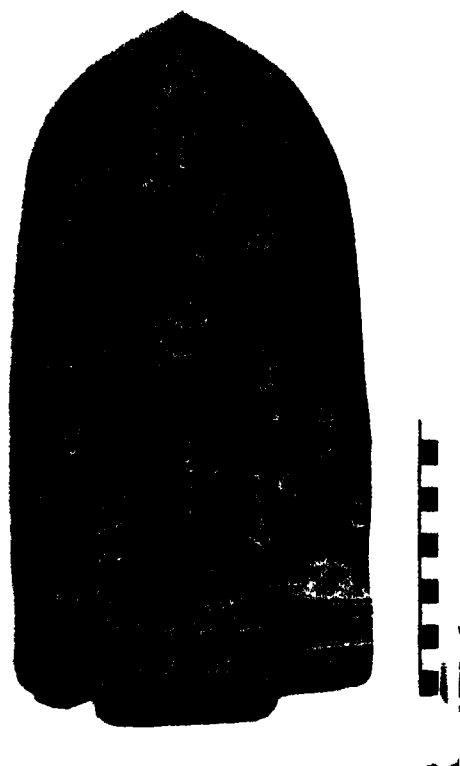
PLATE VI.

FOUR ARMED AVALOKITEŚVARA ATTENDED BY TĀRĀ AND BHRIKUṬI

PLATE VII

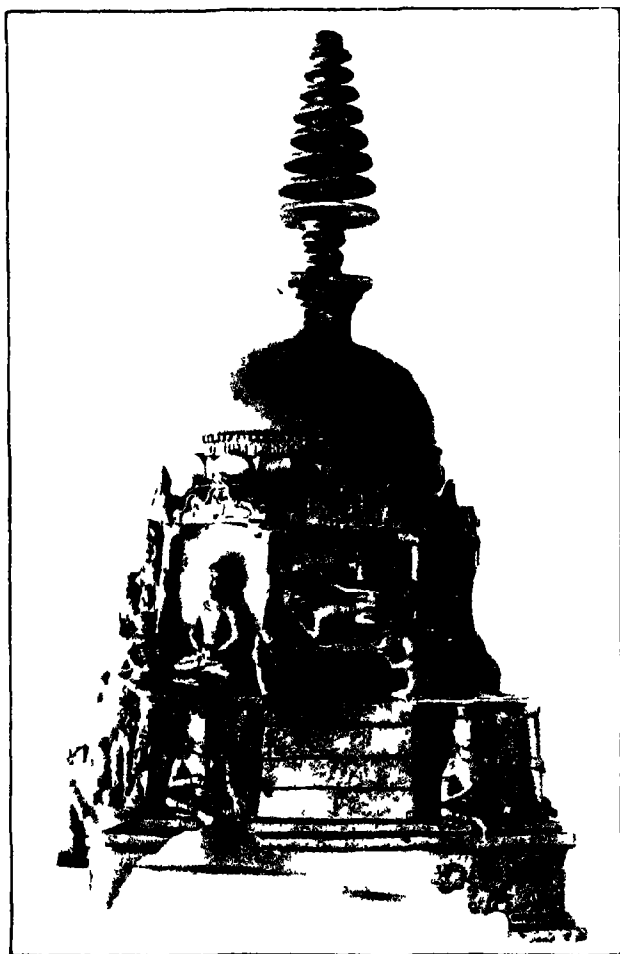
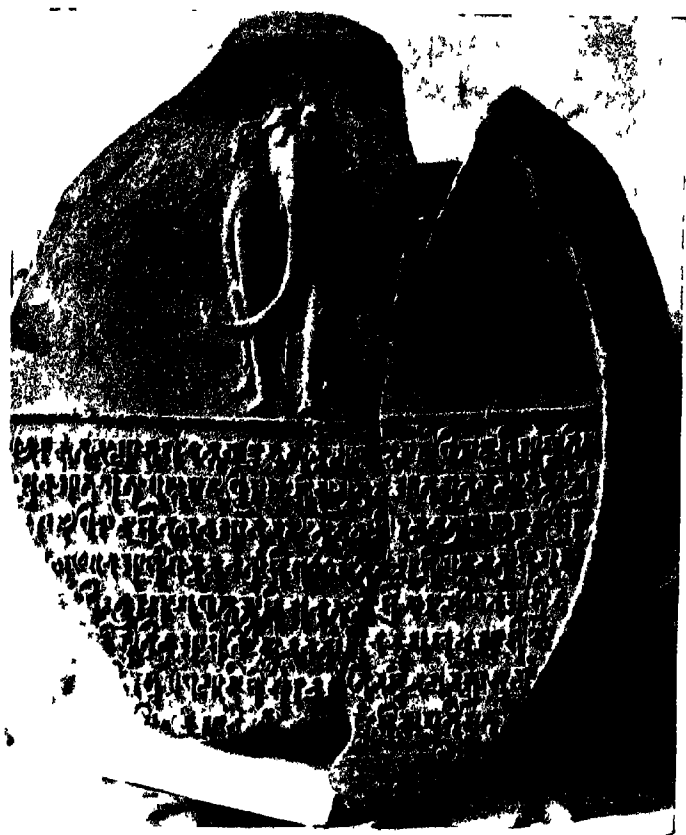
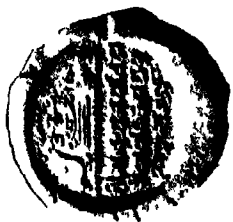
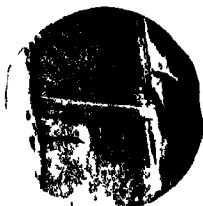
Eighteen armed Goddess probably Prajnaparamita Preaching Law

Votive Stupa with Scenes of Buddha's Life.

SEALING OF BHASKARAVARMAN OF ASSAM

PLATE X

OFFICIAL SEALINGS OF NALANDA MONASTERY